

REGENERATION AND CITIZENSHIP

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Annual Report 2007/08

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ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council's constitution, introduced in December 2001, requires each Scrutiny committee to report its annual progress once a year to the Scrutiny Board. This report covers the Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee's achievement for the year ending 31st March 2007.

2. The Committee

2.1 The membership of the Committee was as follows:

- Chair Councillor Singh
- Vice Chair Councillor Burnett
- Member Councillor Foord
- Member Councillor Neale
- Member Councillor Raquib
- Member Councillor Rutstein
- Member Councillor Stewart

3. Terms Of Reference

3.1 The terms of reference Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee's cover the following areas:

Executive Portfolios	Equalities and Social Inclusion (part) Environment (part) Regeneration and Transport (part)
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Functions	Physical regeneration Major Projects Heritage and Tourism Business Advice and Interface Funding Regimes and Lottery New Deal for Communities Community Empowerment Democracy and Citizenship Social Regeneration Crime and Community Safety
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Leisure and Amenities
Community and Leisure Centres
Inward Investment
Economic Development
Jobs and Training
New Deal – Welfare to Work
Single Regeneration Budget
Regionalism
Sports Action Zone
Community Plan
Culture and Arts
Equalities
Consumer Protection*

(* i.e. Trading Standards and Environmental Health – except for pollution control and pest control)

4. Reviews Completed

4.1 In March 2007, the Committee received a report on the 'Respect Agenda', a Government's initiative published in January 2006, to build on work to tackle anti-social behaviour. The compliance framework document prepared by the Scrutiny section, provided a snapshot of actions that the Council and the other local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) services were taking to meet the requirements of the national Respect Agenda Action Plan.

4.2 The Committee was satisfied with the level of interventions in progress, and commended the Compliance Framework as a reference document to the Heads of relevant Services. The Compliance Framework was reviewed to show progress achieved, in December 2007. The subject was discharged from the work programme, as the Respect Agenda has been superseded by the Government's new strategy for young people, entitled 'Aiming High for Young People', which aims to improve the lives of young people, to enable them to fulfil their potential.

5. Reviews in Progress

5.1 The Committee chose to scrutinise the topic, "Tackling Criminal Damage" in 2007-08, a review that is continuing.

5.2 The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) had identified the topic as an area of concern. Criminal damage accounts for just under a quarter of all British Crime Survey offences, and just over a fifth of recorded crime. Although seen as a minor crime, neglected physical environments are unsafe, cause fear and undermine pride in the local community, and can be a catalyst to other forms of anti-social behaviour and crime. Criminal damage consistently features in the top 3 in lists of anti-social behaviours

causing most concern to the public, costing the UK around £2.1 billion per year in clean-up and other associated costs.

5.3 So, apart from reducing crime and fear of crime, a reduction in criminal damage would have economic benefits in costs savings to victims and authorities responsible for repairs.

5.4 The CDRP has a multi-agency criminal damage action plan to address the issue, but this was being assimilated within the three-year Strategic Partnership Plan being launched in April 2008. The Committee aim to monitor progress on this topic and report in due course.

6. Call-In

6.1 The committee dealt with no 'call-in' during the year.

7. Monitoring Function

7.1 The Committee received reports on the following:

- Progress of the Stockwood Discovery Centre project;
- The Consultation on, 'Delivering Housing and Regeneration: Communities England and the Future of Social Housing Regulation Consultation';
- The recommendations of the Local Development Framework Working Party.
- An update on the performance of Leisure Trust - Active Luton;
- Budgets and budget prospects 2008-09;
- Feedback from a number of third sector recipients of council grants about their summer activities;
- Annual update on the Community Safety Strategy performance;
- The annual review of Domestic Abuse in Luton, including details of the revised strategy;
- The East of England Regional Assembly Regional Economic Strategy;
- Single Group Funding and Interpretation - Two aspects of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion - Our Shared Future report;
- Luton Drug And Alcohol Partnership - performance and funding;
- Grants allocation – annual recommendations.

8. Future Work

8.1 The Committee's future work programme includes:

- Continuation of the "Tackling Criminal Damage" topic
- Social enterprise organisations in Luton

- Aspects of 'Integration and Cohesion - Our Shared Future'

8.2 Monitoring reports will cover:

- Marsh Farm – Way Forward
- An update on the performance of Leisure Trust - Active Luton;
- An update on the performance Luton Cultural Services Trust;
- Budgets and budget prospects;
- Feedback from a number of third sector recipients of council grants about their summer activities;
- Annual update on the Community Safety Strategy performance;
- Luton Drug And Alcohol Partnership - performance and funding;
- Grants allocation – annual recommendations.

Councillor L. Singh
Chair of the Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee

17th April 2007